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**USTR Zoellick & Commerce Secretary Evans Announce
Appointment of Governor Racicot as
Special Representative for U.S.-Canada Softwood Lumber Issues**

WASHINGTON – United States Trade Representative Robert B. Zoellick and Commerce Secretary Don Evans announced today the appointment of former Governor Marc Racicot of Montana as Special Representative for U.S.-Canada softwood lumber issues.

His appointment is intended to augment the productive ongoing softwood lumber talks and reflects the importance of our relationship with Canada, our largest trading partner and close ally. Governor Racicot will work to build the necessary consensus on both sides of the border for resolution of this trade dispute.

“Governor Racicot’s experience in managing Montana’s state forests, first-hand knowledge of the lumber industry and appreciation of the related economic and environmental issues will serve us well in developing a durable solution to this complex issue. I am honored to have him join our team,” Ambassador Zoellick said.

“Governor Racicot is an extraordinary public servant, and his appointment demonstrates the importance we attach to this matter. I am pleased that he has agreed to work with us on resolving this difficult issue,” Secretary Evans said. “This dispute has endured for decades, and it is our hope that, with the Governor’s help, we can achieve a lasting market-based solution for an industry that so many American businesses, workers, and families depend on.”

“Resolution of the challenges surrounding the softwood lumber trade issue will require everyone’s hard work and good will,” Governor Racicot said. “I am honored to accept the appointment from Ambassador Zoellick and Secretary Evans and will do whatever I can to assist in finding a fair and lasting solution.”

Background

Mr. Racicot is a former two-term Governor (1993-2001) and Attorney General (1988-1993) of the State of Montana. Prior to being elected Attorney General, Mr. Racicot was an Assistant Attorney General and Special Prosecutor for the State of Montana. He recently joined the law firm of Bracewell & Patterson, L.L.P., where his legal practice focuses on government relations and public policy resolution.

Since July, the United States has held four meetings with Canada on the softwood lumber dispute, known as the “constructive dialogue.” Each of our meetings with Canada, most recently here in Washington October 2-4, has further confirmed that there is sufficient common ground to continue moving forward toward a durable solution as an alternative to litigation. The next working level meetings are being held in Vancouver (10/17-19) and in Montreal (10/22-26).

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